

Wayne County Courthouse
Courthouse Square
Richmond
Wayne County
Indiana

HABS No. IN-115

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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WAYNE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Location:

Occupies the block between Main and South "A" Streets, and Third and Fourth Streets, Courthouse Square, Richmond, Wayne County, Indiana.

BSGS Richmond Quadrangle; Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 16.679960.4410610.

Present Owner
and Occupant:

Wayne County.

Present Use:

Administrative offices and courts.

Statement of
Significance:

The Wayne County Courthouse is one of Indiana's most imposing 19th century courthouses, and is a handsome example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. It is massively scaled with rock-faced stone walls, rounded arches, and steeply pitched multiple gable roofs. The structure was designed by prominent Midwest architect James McLaughlin of Cincinnati. McLaughlin designed many of Cincinnati's most distinguished late 19th century buildings, including the courthouse, public library and art museum. The courthouse was constructed of excellent materials and embellished with hand-crafted glass windows, wall frescoes, and wooden and stone carvings. Although the structure is predominantly monochromatic, the interplay of surface textures creates an appearance of diversity. Some of the original interior flavor has been lost with the removal of frescoing and original light fixtures, but much of the woodwork and original furniture remain, lending to its overall character. The Courthouse remains one of the Midwest's most impressive 19th century commercial buildings.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1890-93.

2. Architect: James W. McLaughlin (1834-1923).

James McLaughlin was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, the son of William McLaughlin, a partner in the mercantile firm of McLaughlin and Shillito. He was educated in the public schools, and began his career as an apprentice draftsman, working under Cincinnati architect James K. Wilson, and later under J.R. Hamilton. The young architect established his own practice in 1856, which he had closed temporarily during the Civil War to serve in the Infantry Body Guard of Missouri.

McLaughlin designed residences for many of Cincinnati's prominent citizens, but his most important works were public and commercial designs. Included in this group are the Art Museum in Eden Park, the City Opera House, the Hamilton County Courthouse, the YMCA, the Public Library, the Shillito Building, Mabley and Carew's, the Johnston, the Wiggins, and the Zoological Society Buildings.

In his capacity as a professional architect, McLaughlin was one of the organizers of the Cincinnati Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1870, serving as president of the Chapter from 1878 to 1882, and again from 1889 to 1893. In addition, he was a Director of the A.I.A.'s national organization for many years. Closing his office in 1912, McLaughlin retired that year to New York, where he died in 1923.

In 1889, the Wayne County Commissioners invited architects to submit plans for the new courthouse. Architects who entered the competition included E.E. Myers of Detroit, Bunting and Son of Indianapolis, J.H. Stem and Brothers and Frank C. Doran, both of Indianapolis. The Board rejected these architects' proposed plans and appointed a prominent Cincinnati architect, James W. McLaughlin, on 7 November 1887. McLaughlin's fee was set at 3-1/2% of the total estimated cost of construction--\$260,000. Since he was not required to be on the site during the actual building, McLaughlin was also paid \$25 for each on site visit.

3. Original and subsequent owners: Wayne County Commissioners have been the sole owners of the property.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: In May 1890, the Commissioners received bids from contractors, and accepted the lowest bid of \$274,425 from Aaron G. Campfield, a Richmond resident. Later that year, half of the original contract was given over to Edwin M. Campfield.

To choose the building stone, the Board visited quarries in Ohio and Indiana. They chose an oolitic limestone quarried by the Hoosier Stone Company in Bedford, Indiana. Charles Chapman executed the fresco and carved stonework.

The Courthouse's oak furniture was specially ordered from M. Ohmens and Sons of Dayton, Ohio.

The following list is a record of the different kinds of craftsmen involved on the construction of the Courthouse:

Contractor	\$369,004.75
Architect	10,375.00
Superintendent	6,650.39
Legal advice, printing	2,863.67
Frescoing and decoration	5,500.00
Furniture	21,174.85
Gas and light fixtures	5,417.00
Metal furniture	11,641.50
Lock for safe	1,000.00
Grading the yard	742.25
Window shades	281.00
Iron fencing	173.90
Brick walk	974.56
Removing rubbish	8.24
Total	\$435,807.11

5. Original plan and construction: The Richmond, Indiana newspaper "The Evening" reported of the new courthouse on January 29, 1890:

"The building will be in the center of the courthouse square, and will be 212 x 124 feet in size, two stories with attic and basement and a tower running 135 feet in the air. It will front Fourth Street, with the tower on the northeast corner. It will be built of stone with red tiling for the roof, marble stairs and wainscoting, and marble tilings for the floors of the corridors and rotundas. It is expected to make it fire-proof, and it will cost \$300,000 to complete it.

"There will be a splendid basement, but as it will be devoted to the boiler rooms, vaults for old records and papers, storage rooms, and the like, it is unnecessary to give a plan of it. The only rooms which the public will use at all in this portion of the building will be the surveyor's, coroner's, county superintendent of schools, and assessors' offices, which will all be easy of access and splendidly lighted."

The first floor rooms, laid out in a symmetrical arrangement around a large, square center stair hall included the Commissioners' room (22 x 46) and private room (16 x 14), the Auditors' room (14 x 22) and office (38 x 16), Recorder's records (30 x 46), office (16 x 38), and private room (14 x 24), Sheriff's office (16 x 38) and private room (14 x 24), Clerk's office (31 x 38), private room (14 x 22), and records (30 x 46), Treasurer's office (38 x 45) and private office (22 x 25). Second floor room primarily included the court rooms and judges' chambers.

6. Alterations and additions: The original slate roofing has been resurfaced with asphalt shingles. Front entrance doorways have been replaced by framed anodized aluminum glass door. On the interior, the skylights above the main stair hall have been closed off, and the fresco woodwork is no longer visible, nor is the woodwork ornamenting the office counters. Additional offices have been built into the basement area.

B. Sources of Information

1. Old views:

Daltry, Edwin F., Pictorial History of the City of Richmond, Richmond, 1896, page 17.

Rendering by James McLaughlin, County Commissioners' room, Wayne County Courthouse.

2. Bibliography:

Greve, Charles T. Centennial History of Cincinnati, Vol. II. Chicago: Biographical Publishing Company, 1876, 616-17.

Hermanson, David. Indiana Courthouses of the Nineteenth Century. Muncie, 1968.

History of Cincinnati and Hamilton Counties, Ohio. S.B. Nelson and Company, 1894, pp. 893-94.

Kennedy, Mrs. James P., "The Wayne County Courthouse," Richmond Library, 1973.

Record of the New Courthouse, Vol. I, in Wayne County Commissioners' Records.

Richmond "The Evening Item," July 20, 1889; January 29, 1890; March 20, 1893.

Wayne County Commissioners' Records, Wayne County
Courthouse, Vols. 18-21.

Who Was Who in America. Chicago, 1943, Vol. I, p. 818.

Prepared by Robert Brueggmann
Team Historian
Historic American
Buildings Survey
Summer 1974

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character:

The courthouse is one of Indiana's most imposing 19th century public buildings, and is a handsome example of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture. It is massively scaled with rock-faced stone walls, rounded arches, and steeply pitched multiple gable roofs. The courthouse was constructed of excellent materials and embellished with handcrafted glass windows, wall frescoes, and wooden and stone carvings. Some of the interior's original flavor has been lost due to the removal of frescoing and original light fixtures, but much of the original wood-work and furniture remain, lending to it overall 19th century character.

2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The three-story structure is rectangular and measures approximately 214' (east facade) x 128'.
2. Foundations: Rough Indiana limestone with thick rock-faced grey granite facing laid in ashlar coursing.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The walls are brick with a veneer of buff colored and ashlar coursed Indiana limestone, battered at the first floor. Projecting molded limestone string courses are above the first floor lintels and at the third floor sill. A less outstanding string course is at the second floor sill line. Coursing above the second floor sill string course alternates with wide, then narrow, rows.

4. Structural system, framing: Masonry bearing walls with continuous brick arch floors spring from a steel I-beam support system which forms shallow barrel vaults. Second floor granite columns at the stairwell support steel beams. Interior walls are brick with limestone piers inserted at high concentration load points. The roof is supported by a complex steel truss and column system, exposed in the attic. The attic floor consists of hollow flat arches covered with tiles between steel beams which are hung from the roof structure by steel rods.
5. Porches, stoops: On the second level of the east facade's projecting central pavilion is a triple-arched porch. The arches are formed by a voussoir stone construction and supported by columns which span between a grilled limestone baluster at the base and the arch imposts of the foliated carved capitals.
6. Chimneys: The chimneys are constructed of rock-faced limestone with clusters of pilasters and a projecting limestone cap.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main (east) entry has three deep rectangular openings in the lower level walls. The central opening consists of a pair of doors, with one light each, and is flanked by fixed glass in the other openings. Frames and doors are of black anodized aluminum. The side (north and south) entries have rectangular openings. Inscribed on the arch over the carved tympanum on the north door is the date of construction, "A.D. 1890."
 - b. Windows: Single-light double-hung sash windows have wooden muntins and frames. All wood is painted grey. Windows are set deep into the wall surface and are trimmed with vertically tooled reveals and recessed stone sills. The double window openings are separated by narrow stone segments. Second-floor windows are framed by a rectangular or arched transom; the segmental-arched transoms on the east elevation are fitted with stained glass. A Romanesque style colonnette pier separates the double windows on the north and south facade, and rock-faced voussoir arches define the arch over each window. Windows on the east and west elevations are divided into three sections. Double transoms cap the four third floor windows on the central pavilion. Inset into the east and west gables are voussoir arches with stone grille infill and leaded glass.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The main roof is steeply pitched with a longitudinal (north-south) and transverse (east-west) running ridge. Black asphalt shingles are a recent replacement for the former red clay tiles.
- b. Cornice and eaves: The shallow cornice has a string of corbelled dentils concealing gutters. The gables are trimmed with stone parapets and disengaged colonnettes at the eave.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: A large portion of the full basement has been renovated into office spaces. Access from the first floor is by a stairwell north of the main corridor.
- b. First floor: The building is nearly symmetrical about a square central stairhall, which rises from the basement up through the third floor. The entry on the east elevation opens into the central lobby and a sixteen-foot stairwell. A hallway with office on each side extends through the building, north to south.
- c. Second floor: A loop corridor surrounds the central stairwell. Offices open off of the exterior perimeter with the exception of the corridor windows on the west elevation.
- d. Third floor: Similar in plan to the second floor, except that the east side is closed off by a courtroom which abutts the main stairwell.

2. Stairways: The wide stair between the first and second floors has two straight runs with a common landing. Limestone risers, red marble treads, a heavy polished marble railing with large, round balusters and closed limestone stringers frame the stairs. The railing detail is repeated at the second floor's open well; red granite columns with simple limestone bases and carved capitals are placed at intermediate points. The third floor stair well is framed by a solid marble railing and wide arched openings in the four plaster walls; the openings are glazed and painted over on the east (courtroom) side. The two side stairways between the second and third floors have two open runs with a landing, closed metal stringers with squared metal balusters, heavy metal newel posts, and an oak rail; treads are white marble and risers are metal.

3. Flooring: White marble in all the public spaces and wooden plank flooring in the offices.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Painted plaster walls and ceilings with pink marble wainscot and red marble chair rails. The base is black marble. Early photographs indicate that the interior was originally covered with polychrome frescoing.
5. Doorways and doors: All doors and trim are of golden oak. Within the offices, openings are 6'-8" high. Each door is trimmed with three tiers of five molded panels and is framed by molded trim and engaged columns. The first-floor doors off the public corridors are higher and have a moveable transom overhead. Frames are recessed into the plaster opening. Second-floor doors are also framed by a moveable transom, and have stylized capitals on the engaged columns. With the exception of a second transom, third floor doors off public corridors are similar to first floor openings.
6. Special decorative features: Window trim is oak and set deeply into their openings. Pieces of the original office counters, elaborately carved, remain in the treasurer's and auditor's office. Golden oak wood and circular pilasters trim the surfaces of the treasurer's office. Projecting green marble is set into black marble at the teller's counter. Most of the original fireplaces with golden oak trimmed hearths and glazed tiles remain. The judge's bench and molded paneling in the courtroom, also remain. Although the original frescoing and gas fixtures have been removed, the art glass and oak furniture throughout the building is original.
7. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: A central boiler system with radiators and convectors heats the building. Two large air shafts supply ventilation through low decorative wall grilles, though only one of the two large ventilator towers still projects above the roofline. An air conditioning system which serves the entire building is installed in the attic.
 - b. Elevators: The original hydraulic elevator has been replaced by an electric one.

- D. Site: The land upon which the courthouse stands occupies an entire city block in the downtown business and commercial district, and is in close proximity to other municipal, county, state, and federal facilities. The building is surrounded by trees and the site slopes gently away to adjacent streets. A large concrete paved walkway leads to the east entry.

Prepared by Mort Karp
Project Supervisor
Historic American
Buildings Survey
Summer 1974

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. The project was completed in the summer of 1974 under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS; and Associate Professor Mort Karp of the University of Arkansas, Project Supervisor; the Architect Harry Hunderman (University of Michigan); and student assistant architects Scott Barnard (University of Pennsylvania), Mark Hall (Pennsylvania State University), and Richard Perlmutter (Yale University); and architectural historian Robert Bruegmann (University of Pennsylvania) at the HABS Field Office, Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana. Photographs were taken by HABS staff photographer Jack E. Boucher in January 1975. The written historical and architectural data was edited, and in some cases expanded upon, in the HABS Washington office in April 1979 by staff historian, Jan E. Cigliano.

ADDENDUM TO
WAYNE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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